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# STORY SEEKERS

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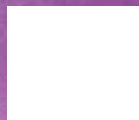
TRAINING PROGRAMME KS2

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LESSONS ONE TO EIGHT

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The Story Seeker Training Programme  
has been developed in partnership with



## AIMS

- I can talk about why I am training to be a Story Seeker
- I can talk about stories that I know
- I can tell you why I think stories matter
- I can share some of the reasons why I like a story
- I can find a story to bring to school and share with my fellow trainees.

### LESSON ONE:

## JOINING THE MISSION - BECOMING A STORY SEEKER

**Focus:** In this session, children are introduced to the Story Seeker mission via the *Meet the Story Seekers* film appealing for their help. The exercises and discussion prompts that follow support the class in understanding what they are being asked to do as Story Seekers, including how they can engage with becoming a Story Seeker and what they might need to successfully achieve the aims of the mission.

### ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

#### 1. OUR FAVOURITE STORIES - VISUALISATION

Pupils are asked to imagine a world without stories and what that would mean. They are then asked to think about and imagine their favourite story and discuss the range of favourite stories in the class.

#### 2. WATCH THE MEET THE STORY SEEKERS FILM AND DISCUSS

#### 3. EXPLORING IMAGINARY WORLDS

Pupils are asked to imagine a world where people are isolated from other people and what it is like in this world. They are then asked to imagine a utopia (as described in the film) and to represent these two worlds in freeze frames. Discuss how the Story Seeker mission can inspire people to come back to dreaming, creating, sharing and connecting.

# ACTIVITY ONE:

## OUR FAVOURITE STORIES - VISUALISATION

Before watching the film *Meet the Story Seekers* with your class, spend a little time setting up the themes and ideas that the Story Seekers will be discussing. If possible, ask the children to sit in a large circle so that everyone can see each other and so that every child has the opportunity and space to share their experiences and ideas.

Ask the pupils to close their eyes and try to imagine a world without stories. *What would that be like? What would be missing? What would the consequences be?* You might take some initial thoughts and ideas from the children.

Now, ask them to imagine their favourite story. Encourage them to take the time to let the story come to mind, to picture it in their mind's eye. You might suggest aspects the story for them to add to their visualisation – the characters; the story world; a quest or mission; something a character wants or needs; an obstacle that a character has to face; or perhaps there is something or someone that helps the character. Finally, ask them to visualise in their imagination how their favourite story ends.

Allow a little time for the pupils to 'see' their story. Then, ask them to sit up straight and clearly and loudly say the title of their favourite story. You could ask them to say it twice – the first time they say it, they can imagine it's a rehearsal. Then, they can pause and breathe and then share their title again with energy and enthusiasm to show it's their favourite story.

You could discuss the range of stories from across the class.

*Do the children notice any similarities or contrasts?*

*Where have those stories come from?*

*Are they stories that the children have heard, stories they have read, stories from book or from popular culture?*

As well as setting up stories as being central to

our wider – even global – community, at this stage this also gives the opportunity to hear from every child and to draw together the class as our own community of readers, of writers, of learners, of storytellers – ready for the mission that is about to be revealed.

Explain that we're about to watch an urgent message that has been sent to our school from the future appealing for our help.

### ASC/SEND ADAPTATION

This scheme of work includes adaptations of certain exercises for ASC/SEND pupils in lilac text.

In the Mission guide we talk about some of the huge benefits of marking out the space and how having a strong structure from the beginning is key. You could talk about how the oldest form of storytelling happened around a fire in a circle and how they passed around the talking stick to take turns in speaking while everybody else listened.

This gives you a great opportunity to introduce a prop for the start of each session that will relate to that topic. For example, you could pass around a story book, story wand, or something sensory like an old book with that old bookshop smell. Always start your sessions with this so it gives a clear indication that Story Seekers has started. It could be as simple as going around the group, asking everyone to introduce themselves and to tell us one of their favourite stories. To help with understanding an imagined world with no stories why not change around the order of this to help scaffold this concept:

- Pass the 'talking stick' around and ask for one of their favourite stories and why they like it?
- After going around the whole class ask them to imagine a world without any of these or anyone else's stories and go around again and ask how that would make them feel.
- Explain they are just about to watch a message from the future that has been sent to your school.



# ACTIVITY TWO: MEET THE STORY SEEKERS

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## WATCH THE *MEET THE STORY SEEKERS* FILM (17 MINUTES)

After watching the film, give the children a chance to respond to what they saw and heard.

- Who are these travellers and what do they want?
- What do we know about the mission?
- What surprised you? What was most memorable?
- Why are Story Seekers needed?
- Why have they come to us?

This is where you could add visual aids of the Story Seekers and add them to your story wall and the mission objective.

Why not also learn the salutes that the Story Seekers use by call and response. Learn them together as a class so you can use them whenever you need to refer to them.



# ACTIVITY THREE: EXPLORING IMAGINARY WORLDS

Return to the description in the film of what the world was like before the Story Seekers helped:

**‘And they became isolated; they forgot how to dream; they forgot how to create; they forgot how to share’**

(You could rewatch this short section of the film (00:35 – 00:47) or display this quote on the interactive whiteboard).

Ask the class to close their eyes and picture the people living in this world.

*What would it be like?*

*How would people respond?*

*How would they behave?*

*What do they think towns and cities and schools would be like if people were isolated, if people were unable to dream, create or share?*

*What would it feel like to be a child in that world?*

In small groups ask them to create a freeze frame to depict this world (a world that thankfully the Story Seekers saved humanity from).

A freeze frame is simply a tableau or still image held by the pupils as though time has stopped or a photograph has been taken of that moment. Encourage them to think about who they are in their image and how this isolated world has impacted their behaviour.

*What are they doing?*

*What are they thinking?*

*What are they feeling?*

When they have decided on the answers to these questions, they will then need to work out how they are going to show this physically.

*How will they use their body language and their facial expressions to communicate what their character is thinking and feeling?*

*What is their character doing?*

Next, in the same small groups, repeat the task, but this time visualising and preparing a freeze frame of an image of their perfect utopia – the opposite of the bleak dystopian possibility that they have just shared. They could draw upon the depiction of the future shared in the Meet the Story Seekers film (02:23–03:39).

## TEACHERS NOTE:

In talking about the impact in this imaginary world of people becoming isolated, children may raise connections with their own experiences during the pandemic, particularly the times in which they may have been educated via remote learning and physically isolated from their peers.

This is a natural response to the unique situation that many of the children in class experienced. Even children who had a relatively straightforward experience of the pandemic may appreciate the chance to talk about their experiences. More importantly, there may have been things that happened at home that you don't know about.

Make sure that the classroom is a safe place for discussions if you have children who want to talk and also that adults make themselves available to children so that they know who they can come to if they have something they wish to share or talk about away from the group.

Once they have rehearsed, shared and refined their two still images, support children in transitioning from one to the other. You could slowly count down from ten to zero while they very slowly transform from the first image to the second. You could also use a short piece of music – perhaps something from a futuristic film score – as the backdrop to their transition as the pace and

pulse of the music will provide them with a rhythm to follow for their transformation.

E.g. *The Essential Philip Glass* (1993) is an excellent instrumental resource with varying tempos and styles to support pupils with expressive movement and feeling. The track 'Facades' would work well for this activity.

## ► WHY NOT?

If you wish to develop children's in-role work further use **thought tracking** to share with the rest of the class what the characters within the freeze frame are thinking and feeling. Whilst in their tableau, one-by-one tap each character on the shoulder, at which point they can come to life and share in first person what their character is thinking before returning to their still image. Ensure that you give children enough time to think, discuss and rehearse in the group so they are able to prepare a short response, particularly if they haven't engaged in much role play work in the past.

They can also include elements of their own imagined future.

## ► WHY NOT?

The futuristic world that the Story Seekers come from was developed from the ideas of primary school children through asking them the following questions:

- How would people travel in the future?
- What would food be like?
- What do you do for fun?
- What will the world smell like?
- What does a city look like?
- What do clothing and hair look like?
- What does music sound like?
- What are the animals like?
- What are the plants, trees and flowers like?

You could use the same questions to further develop children's ideas about their own vision of the future. They might continue to draw upon that in their Story Seeker training, or they could develop it visually, orally or in writing in creative literacy, art or DT sessions alongside this project.

After children have shared and discussed their work, use this physical manifestation of change to reflect on what might lead people to becoming isolated in that way and what could hopefully prompt a transition to a more positive outlook.

*What might they need to inspire them to come back to dreaming, creating, sharing and connecting?*

Return to the idea of the Story Seeker mission as the way in which the class can inspire the population of today and of the future.

*Why do you think our visitors from the future are asking us to do this?*

*Why are children going to be the best Story Seekers?*

*Why might the adults described by the time travellers need help from us?*

*Are you ready to begin your Story Seeker training?*

*What do you need to achieve your mission?*

As well as using some of the prompts listed above to stimulate discussion, ensure that children have space and time to ask their own questions prompted by what they have seen in the film and explored during the session.

To explore this world and how you could create it, you could add sensory elements.

How would this world feel with stories?

- Rich colours and smooth soft textures. Maybe some sweet fresh smells. How would this world feel without stories?
- Explore rough hard cold textures. Maybe stale stagnant smells.

**Clay Modelling** – This is a great exercise for your pupils to explore empathy and emotion and how people look and feel in certain situations. It's also a fun way to break down the understanding of body language.

In pairs, one person is the lump of clay and the other is the sculptor. The sculptor models the clay by suggesting how to move their partner's physical appearance to create a person who lives in a place where there are no stories. Be sure to add the facial expression at the end by the sculptor making the expression and the clay mirroring it onto their own face.

Now sculpt someone who lives in a place where there are stories.

You could now transfer from one to the other over the count of five so your pupil feels the difference in their bodies of how it may feel.

Make sure to swap around so both have a chance to be the sculptor and clay.

## LESSON TWO:

# WHAT IS STORY?

**Focus:** In this second lesson, we want to start children on their journey as trainee Story Seekers. They will be given time to reflect on their knowledge of stories, of familiar characters and tropes across a whole range of tales. This knowledge will be captured collaboratively by the trainees in large visual organisers so that it can be displayed and revisited by the class as they continue their training.

## ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

Begin the session with a recap of our class mission as Story Seekers.

### 1. INTRODUCING ARCHETYPES

Pupils are asked to consider different types of stories and archetypal characters within stories.

### 2. STOP AND GO

Pupils are asked to consider how these different archetypes might be represented or interpreted physically.

### 3. GROUP DISCUSSION AND KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS

In groups, pupils discuss and capture their existing knowledge of stories, their different components and how these might be categorised. They then present these to each other to share their collective knowledge of stories.





# ACTIVITY ONE:

## INTRODUCING ARCHETYPES

*Archetype (AR-Kuh-type) Any story element that appears again and again in stories from cultures around the world e.g. an idea, a character type, a setting – any pattern that symbolises something universal about human experience.*

Rewatch the end of the *Meet the Story Seekers* film in which the time travellers list all the different types of stories and character archetypes that might feature in the stories that we will be sharing with each other (14:29–16:20).

Words and phrases from the film that children might reference include:

- *Stories that someone older than you liked when they were young*
- *Stories from other countries, or from different parts of the UK*
- *Stories that make you laugh, or have a moral*
- *Scary stories, mysteries, fables, fairy tales, tragedies, epics, adventures, yarns*
- *Stories with werewolves, wizards, woodcutters, ghosts, goblins, griots, pixies, princes, pirates, lizards, leopards, liars, milkmaids, marsupials, Mami Watas, djinns, demons, dragons, yogi, yeoman, yoki, foolish adults, thoughtful elders, or fearless children...*

Take some time to discuss what the children heard in the clip:

*What did they find memorable or interesting?*

*What did they make connections with?*

*What are they already familiar with?*

*What have they never heard of before but are curious about?*

*Were any particular stories coming to mind when they heard the list?*

If there are words or phrases that they aren't familiar with, note those phrases on the working wall to discuss or look up later under a heading 'What We Want to Find Out'.

Next, explore some of these character archetypes physically with the following exercise.

Why not add some visual examples of archetypes of famous characters to add to the story wall. Or maybe return to 'Clay Modelling' to sculpt some famous archetypes, for example:

Ghosts, wizards, woodcutters, pirates, dragons etc.

You could also include some simple bits of sensory material for the characters.

- Bubble wrap for dragons
- Silky material for ghosts
- Shiny material for a wizard's cloak.

# ACTIVITY TWO: STOP AND GO

This activity gets children moving and using their imaginations and bodies to depict characters, objects and settings in archetypal stories. Try to access as large a space as possible. If the school hall is not available, you could use a section of the playground, or clear the desks to the edges of the classroom.

Start by asking the children to find a space and to stand still, ready to begin the game of Stop and Go. Then, ask the children to move around the room on their own, trying to keep evenly spread across the space and to not move too quickly or too slowly, finding a common pace.

When you say STOP, everyone has to stop where they are, as still as a statue. When you say GO, everyone moves off at the same time. As the exercise develops, you may choose to add in a few more instructions, for example, when you say CLAP, the class must clap once, all at the same time, so it sounds like one clap; or when you say JUMP, the class jumps as one.

Try a few rounds of this to build the class' focus and concentration. It will also create a sense of working together collaboratively.

Now ask them to create a still image or freeze frame of the things you call out.

For example:

- A witch
- A king
- A princess
- A dragon
- A trickster spider
- A frog
- A pirate
- A griot
- A lizard
- A marsupial
- A djinn
- A loki

If they don't know what some of these are, you could ask them to create an image of what they imagine they might be – what does the word suggest to them?

If space is limited, you can do the exercise standing, without having to move around. Ask the children to stand in neutral then take up the image as they are called out then relax back into neutral.

You could build on this exercise by making some images where children have to collaborate in small groups to create the image – or even work together as the whole class.

For example:

- A castle
- A forest
- A swamp
- The ball that Cinderella is invited to
- Each house from the three little pigs

You could also bring some of the images alive and ask the children to move and make the sounds they imagine.

### ► TEACHERS NOTE:

For this exercise, it would be best to initially limit the archetypes you call out to no more than five or six, although this could easily be expanded if you repeat the exercise during future sessions. Start mainly with character archetypes that you feel that the class can visualise confidently, while introducing just a couple that might be less familiar.

Using the same archetypes you used for the 'Clay Modelling' will help with processing times in this game. Adding a sound or phrase to each character in a call and response would add another layer.

For a more sensory route into the exercise, you could add some elements around character and their environments

- Windboard (Three little pigs)
- Water spray (Rainforest)
- Chocolate smell (Willy Wonka).



# ACTIVITY THREE:

## GROUP DISCUSSION AND KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS

Ask children to get together in small groups (with perhaps five or six pupils in each group). Give each group a set of markers or felt tip pens and a large sheet of paper.

Ask them to talk about and capture on paper a representation of 'what is story'. Suggest that they think back to the conversation at the start of this session and the favourite stories they visualised during the previous session as a starting point for their group discussion.

Support the children by offering a series of prompts to stimulate their discussions:

- *Discuss and note down the titles of the stories you know*
- *Discuss the types of stories that you particularly enjoy*
- *List common characters from one or more stories*
- *List common settings, etc.*
- *Are there any common words or phrases that you expect to find in stories?*

As they talk, encourage them to keep trying to capture everything on their paper. They can make lists in columns, create mind maps, spider diagrams or a giant word cloud – any type of visual organiser that captures their knowledge of stories so that it can be shared with the rest of the class. After sufficient time, ask each group to summarise and present some of the main things that they talked about and how they chose to capture that information. Use this as an opportunity to begin to collate and celebrate the wealth of story knowledge held collectively by this group of trainee Story Seekers.

A different way you could collate 'What is Story?' is by creating a **Story Soup**

- Why not create a story soup by writing down ingredient cards for your story cook story book
- Look at what ingredients you would need for a romance soup, comedy soup or an adventure soup
- You could use some prepared props that can be chosen and added to the soup which you are preparing
- You could develop this even further by each student physicalising each ingredient (character, emotion, setting) and mix it up in a group bowl. Once 'cooked' you could set it out as a front cover picture of the story.





## ► WHY NOT?

You could extend this exercise and build on their categorisations. Which of the stories they have listed are fairy tales, fables, myths, legends, adventure or romance? Which are older stories and which are newer or more modern stories? Are there some stories that are difficult to place in a category?

As the children start to draw upon the storytelling culture and archetypes of different countries around the world, it would be the perfect time use this as an opportunity to start to map these out. You could pin those titles or characters to a class map, so that we can start to see the geographical and cultural spread of our knowledge around stories.

As a class, do they know stories from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland? Do they know stories from Europe, the Caribbean, South America, China, India, West Africa, Australia, the Pacific Islands or the even the Arctic?

There might be stories with different countries of origins but that appear the same or very similar, indicating that they have likely crossed over seas and boundaries. There might be stories for which they don't know the origin: how might they find out?

Identify places on the map for which the children think they don't know any stories, setting them an early challenge of trying to find some. They could speak to members of the school community or draw on the class resources, books and appropriate web pages.



## LESSON THREE:

# RESPONDING TO A STORY: THE GWOLLUMPS' TALE

**Focus:** In this session, the children will explore *The Gwollumps' Tale* (as featured *Meet the Story Seekers* film from lesson one). By the end of the lesson, children should be able to talk about why this might be a useful type of story for the Story Seekers. What is its potential as a story that teaches, or a story that heals? Although this story was created for the purposes of this project, it includes many elements of the oral storytelling tradition and provides a common ground for the children to start from regardless of prior experience.

## ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

### 1. STORY WHOOSH

Guided by the teacher, pupils act out *The Gwollumps' Tale* from the *Meet the Story Seekers* film using the Story Whoosh exercise. A script of the synopsis of the story can be downloaded from the Story Seekers website in the TRAIN section.

### 2. ON THE LINE

Ask pupils draw what they feel is the most important or significant moment in *The Gwollumps' Tale*. Peg their image to a 'story line', working collaboratively to decide on the appropriate order and justifying the reasons for their choice of image.

### 3. SIX-PART STORY METHOD

Responding to a series of prompts, pupils create a story map from which they can begin to tell their own version of *The Gwollumps' Tale*. Pupils are introduced to key features of the narrative of a story.

### 4. HOME LEARNING TASK

Pupils are challenged to seek a favourite story from a family member or someone from their community and to complete a six-part story template for this story in preparation for the next level of the Story Seeker Training.

## ACTIVITY ONE: STORY WHOOSH

Start the session by engaging the class in their own retelling of *The Gwollumps' Tale* with every member of the class enacting elements of the story.

A Story Whoosh is a way of acting out a story with the whole class allowing them to see the narrative line, the action and the characters in broad brushstrokes. It is important to go around the circle with each child taking part in turn, making it an inclusive and accessible activity in which all the children contribute to acting out the story. The teacher takes an active role as narrator/director and supports the children in the creation of the images.

To begin, organise the class into a circle and explain that you are going to act out the whole

story as a Story Whoosh.

Read each moment of the Story Whoosh out ([see Story Whoosh script](#)) and ask children in sequence around the circle to come into the middle and make an image to show what is happening. This image may be moving or still, with words or without, according to the storytelling teacher's direction or guidance. When you say 'Whoosh!', that group of story actors is whooshed back into their places in the circle, and the next children in turn will be invited to act out the next episode in the story.

To help with understanding of the 'Story Whoosh' you could use a prop/puppet or even a hat that makes clear the transference of characters around the class.

## ACTIVITY TWO: ON THE LINE

This is an activity for exploring story structure with the class that works against the idea that stories have easily identifiable beginnings, middles and ends, allowing children to identify what they think and feel is at the heart of a good story and to visualise it. All events in a story are important and whilst some may be more important than others, each event is linked to the others in the narrative to make a coherent whole. This exercise creates an opportunity for the children to think about their personal responses to the story and to make their own judgements about significance.

After they have refreshed their memory of the overall story by participating in the Story Whoosh, ask the class to work in pairs for this activity. Once they have chosen a partner, ask the class to decide in their pairs what moment in the story *they* think is the most important. It will be essential to ensure that they know that it is their decision.

Once they have made their decision, ask each pair to draw that moment from the story. If possible,

demonstrate the value of this activity by providing art paper and appropriate drawing or painting materials.

Pin up a washing line or string to represent the storyline. Ask each pair to peg their image on the washing line, working collaboratively to map out the appropriate sequence of images together. During the pegging out, each pair can give the reasons for their decision. You might draw out similarities and differences in the moments selected across the class. For example, some children may have chosen the same moment but focused on different details.

When you have the class' most important moments depicted, you could then go on to add other story moments to the washing line that the class feels are essential to capture the whole story.

You could have premade moments of the story here which they can still choose. This means you could concentrate and explain each moment in detail.

## ► WHY NOT?

Below are some further exercises and activities that supporting children in responding to and exploring aspects of *The Gwollumps' Tale*.

Ask the children to find a space in the classroom or school hall. Put on some music that complements *The Gwollumps' Tale*. Ask the children to respond with a movement that represents a significant moment from the story, it can be the same moment which they drew for the 'On the Line' activity or a different one. Their movement could be a single gesture or a short series of gestures. They can start by doing this alone in their own space. However, if you wish to develop the exercise, ask the children to join another person and add their movements together in sequence. As the exercise progresses, they could eventually join with up to five people so that together they have five gestures that show the story, or a section of the story.

In small groups, children should decide on a significant or favourite scene from *The Gwollumps' Tale* that they could share with the class as a freeze frame. This could then be brought to life using thought tracking, or developed into a short scene in which the group enacts that element of the story. For a description of how to use freeze frames and thought tracking, see lesson one.

## ACTIVITY THREE: SIX-PART STORY METHOD

This activity gives children the opportunity to break *The Gwollumps' Tale* down into some of its fundamental components and start to think about the features that they feel make the story effective. Consider some archetypal components of traditional tales and oral stories that they can draw upon to support their storytelling and discussions around stories in future sessions.

Ensure that each child has a copy of the [six-part story method template](#) (download from the *TRAIN* section of the *Story Seekers* website).

Work through each of the boxes in sequence, asking them to respond to a series of six prompts as either a drawing or in writing, if that is what the pupil prefers.

1. In the first box, draw the main **character** (or characters, if appropriate). Who is the story about?
2. In the second box, think about the place or the **environment**. Where is the story set?
3. In the third box, consider the **mission**. What does the main character want or need?
4. For the fourth box, consider the **obstacle**. Who or what is the problem that they need to overcome?
5. In the fifth box, ask children to think about anything that **helps** the main character(s) to overcome the obstacle. Who or what helps the main character? Where does help come from?
6. Finally, in the last box, summarise the **resolution**. How does the story end?



When they have finished, you might ask everyone to quietly practise ‘reading’ their story aloud after choosing an opening line such as ‘Once upon a time ...’, or ‘Long ago there lived ...’ to encourage story language. This process can be repeated a number of times with the same story or with stories collected or heard. You may want to ask if anyone would like to have a go at sharing their version of the story with the rest of the class.

Finish the session, by coming back to considering why this story might be helpful for our Story Seekers mission using the following questions as prompts for the discussion.

*Have the Gwollumps learned anything by the end of the story? If so, what have they learnt?*

*What have the young Gwollumps taught the adults in the tale?*

*How does this remind us about our mission as Story Seekers?*

*What messages or ideas might someone take away after listening to the story?*

*Do they know any other stories that have messages, lessons or moral guidance embedded within them?*

As well as drawing in the six-part story template you could look at physically providing six chairs or clearly marked out spaces/zones to act out their chosen moments and use the props you have from the story whoosh.

Label each one as follows-

1. Characters (Gwollumps)
2. Environment (Sunny beautiful savannah)
3. Mission (To find new luscious pink grass to graze)
4. Obstacle (The pastures are empty)
5. Help (The golden feathered Nitpick Bird offers good advice)
6. Resolution (Before the grass is gone the herd moves on)

You now have a strong structure which you could use as a framework for exploring their own story.

They could create their own ‘Story Machine’ as follows

Once upon a time there lived...

They lived in...

One day they decided...

But the problem was...

5. Thankfully...

6. Which meant...

Altogether – *And they lived happily ever after*

## ► TEACHERS NOTE:

Be aware that as each question is asking for the child to make their own judgement about the response to the story, be prepared that, although the fundamental story remains the same, there may be different interpretations for this story across the activity. This could be a useful moment to talk about the way in which each storyteller puts their own spin on stories that have been retold and reinvented for many, many years. Reflect that this is their way of telling the story – we might have 30 different versions – this is what they bring to the story, as the storyteller, even though it is essentially the same story.

# ACTIVITY FOUR: HOME LEARNING TASK

Before the class can move onto Story Seeker Training level two, there is a home learning task that needs to be undertaken.

Explain that already in their training they have shared what their favourite story is, they have captured their knowledge of story structures, cultures and traditions, and they have worked together to collectively retell a story.

Now they're ready for the final challenge for a level one trainee – to go out and seek a story from a friend, a family member or a member of their community.

Discuss the challenge of asking members of their family or community what their favourite story is.

The children should choose one of the stories told to them by their friends or family or community members to capture on paper using the same six-part story template and the question prompts that they used during lesson three of their training.

You may consider allowing pupils to make an audio recording of the story being told to help them to remember the detail. Family members could also be encouraged to tell them the story more than once.

*It will also be important for you to undertake the same task as the pupils – this will support you in modelling the process for the class and also implicitly demonstrate that you are valuing the Story Seeker training by taking part yourself.*

Allow a sufficient gap between sessions three and four so that children have time to find their story and fill out the template. Check in with children who may be finding it difficult to find a story. They need to know their story well enough for the activities outlined in lesson four. Filling out the six-part story template will help them do this.

## TEACHERS NOTE:

For children who you believe may find it difficult to gather a story make sure you have a bank of stories for them to choose from and allow time and space so that they can be supported to choose a story that they feel strongly about. You could ask them to browse the stories by professional story tellers in the **Story Seeker Story Bank** to find one that they like. They may wish to look for a story that connects with where they grew up, where they live or that is connected with their family's broader heritage. Most importantly, it needs to be a story that they want to share.

## LESSON FOUR:

## STORY SUMMARY

**Focus:** In this session, children will be given time and support to tell a summary of a chosen story within the safety of a small group of familiar peers. They will achieve their status of level one trainees in preparation for moving on to level two.

### ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

#### 1. TEACHER STORY SUMMARY

The teacher tells a summary of their chosen story (supported by their six-part story template) with the class in order to model a simple storytelling process without a fixed script.

#### 2. PUPIL STORY SUMMARY

Pupils each tell a summary of their chosen stories in small groups using their templates to help them to structure it. As a class they then have an opportunity to discuss similarities and differences between the stories they heard using their story knowledge.

#### 3. STORY STARBOARD

To round off level one of their Story Seeker Training this practical game provides a useful recap of their new found story knowledge.

Finally, pupils watch the special message from the Story Seekers celebrating the end of the completion of level one of their training.

## ACTIVITY ONE: TEACHER'S STORY SUMMARY

### ▶ TEACHERS NOTE:

In advance of this session, ensure that you have selected a story that means something to you or your family, or that you simply really love. Complete the six-part story template for your story and be prepared to tell this to your class.

Start this lesson by talking about the incredible progress they are making as Story Seeker trainees and thanking them for going out and finding a family or community story. Explain that you also found a story to tell them. Introduce the six items on your own template and then demonstrate using your six boxes to tell them a summary of your story.

The summary can be fairly short simply describing the arc of the story, for example:

*'My main character is a tortoise. It takes place a long time ago on the edge of a rainforest.*

*They want water to drink and food to eat because there is a drought. One day they meet a boy from the local village who teaches them a rain dance that his grandfather taught him. It starts to rain, the crops grow and everyone is well fed and watered once again.'*

After you have told them your story summary, give the children an opportunity to discuss and share what they enjoyed about it, whether they knew the story or had heard a similar story themselves.

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## ACTIVITY TWO: PUPIL STORY SUMMARY SHARE

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Explain to the class that they are going to be introducing their stories as well. However, because they're still in training, they won't have to tell their story summary to the whole class yet. You might find time for that later if some children are keen to share their stories more widely. Instead, children are going to do this in small groups.

To prepare them, you might invite them to refresh their memory by writing or drawing their story in the template again ready to tell it to other people in the group. They can write sentences or phrases that they want to use as they tell their stories, on the original template that they created. This will help to embed the most important elements of their chosen story which is key to their journey to becoming storytellers. Giving them opportunities to listen to, read or tell stories more than once throughout their Story Seeker training will also help greatly with this.

Put children into groups of approximately four pupils and allow enough time for each child to be able to tell their stories. If some groups finish early, ask them to start thinking about any common features or similarities across their four stories.

Bring the class back together to talk about the interconnections, the similarities and the differences across the stories they told and heard.

*What did the stories have in common?*

*Were there any similar themes, characters, missions, settings, or resolutions?*

You might want to see if anyone wants to try telling their story to the whole class at this point.

These can both be told in the same way as lesson three using the 'six-point' structure.

As a progression you could work towards eventually taking the chairs away as they get more familiar with their stories into telling their whole story by themselves without having to break down into six parts.

If your pupil is unable to do this, then you could have someone stand in and do it for them as even seeing their story told is very empowering.



# ACTIVITY THREE: STORY STARBOARD

This is a way to allow pupils to get familiar with the essential parts of a story. It requires a large space but can be played outdoors if no indoor space is available. Introduce pupils to five areas of the room: north, south, east and west. The centre of the room is Story Starboard.

Direct the children to each of the areas, one by one, and attribute each area with following the story elements:

## NORTH: ARCHETYPES

**This is where all the traditional story characters, who have survived over time, live. They are known as archetypes.**

## SOUTH: STORY WORLDS

**This is where you can find all the different types of story worlds or environments.**

## EAST: STORY PHRASES

**This is where all the story phrases used by storytellers can be heard.**

## WEST: MISSIONS

**This is where all the missions, needs and quests hang out before an archetype decides to use them in a story adventure.**

You may need to stick down a simple label to remind the class of each of the four areas.

Continue to direct the children to move to the different areas, but instead of using north, south etc., use 'archetypes', 'story phrases', 'story worlds' and 'missions' instead.

Each time pupils move to a new area, ask for a couple of examples of that story element.

*Which archetypes might live here?*

*What story world can you see?*

*What well-known story phrase can you hear?*

*What mission would you choose to go on and why?*

Not all children need to respond each time but ensure that any children who have something to contribute are given the opportunity to do so during the activity. At this stage, you don't need to visit each area in sequence, nor do the ideas shared need to be connected. The children are just generating lots of ideas, recapping and sharing their story knowledge.

Later in the game – and only when you feel the pupils are ready – explain that when you shout Story Starboard everyone must move to the centre of the room. If chosen, they should quickly make up the beginning of a story using all four of the elements.

Finish the session by celebrating the progress they have already made. They are halfway through their training and have already brought these lost stories back – we will be able to carry the stories into the future.

**Finally, pupils watch the special message from the Story Seekers celebrating the completion of Level One of their training.**

## AIMS

- I can identify and talk about what makes a storyteller effective
- I can use my voice (or preferred method of communication) and body to help tell a story to my class
- I can work with others to perform and tell stories
- I can imagine different ways that stories can be shared
- I can find a story to bring to school and share with my fellow trainees.

## LESSON FIVE:

# THE STORYTELLER'S VOICE

**Focus:** The aim of this session is to develop children's confidence in using their voice (or preferred method of communication) and an awareness of how that can be modulated and manipulated to communicate expressively as well as with clarity. This way not only can their stories be heard but they can also be as engaging and entertaining as possible.

## ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

### 1. THE STORY OF MY NAME

Pupils are each encouraged to share something about the story of their own name or why they were given that name.

### 2. FORTUNATELY / UNFORTUNATELY

In this exercise, pupils work cooperatively to invent a story with each pupil contributing one sentence at a time.

### 3. EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING: LANGUAGE

Using their six-part story templates, pupils explore and experiment with how we can use language to paint pictures in the imagination of the listener and engage them in the story.

### 4. EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING: VOCAL TECHNIQUES

Using one of the stories from the **STORY SEEKERS STORY BANK** pupils identify the different ways that the professional storyteller uses their voice – tone, pace, pauses, accents etc. to enhance the performance of their story and effectively engage the listener.

# VOCAL GAMES AND EXERCISES

You may wish to start building in some of the voice exercises below from this point to develop children's vocal fluency, audibility, clarity, and expressiveness. These can be used to begin each lesson in order to start preparing the children for the way they will use their voices for the **CREATE** and **FILM** parts of the project.

## 1. Chewing Gum (warming up your mouth)

Stand or sit in a circle, ask the children to imagine they have a big piece of chewing gum – maybe ask what flavour it is. Ask them to put this imaginary chewing gum in their mouths. What does that do to their mouths? Play with the chewing gum becoming bigger and smaller as they exaggerate their chewing motion.

## 2. I Can Write My Name with My Tongue (for articulation and clarity)

Stand or sit in circle. Ask everyone to stick out their tongue and start spelling out their name using their tongue. As before, encourage them to exaggerate the movements – as big as possible.

## 3. Tongue Twisters (articulation and clarity)

After practising some popular tongue twisters (eg *The greedy Greek geek agreed; Lassie Lilly likes Ronny's rulers; A big black bear ate a big black bug; Round the ragged rock the ragged rascal ran*), you could ask the children to make up their own, perhaps using the theme and ideas of *The Gwollumps' Tale*.

## 4. Boom Chicka Boom (a call and response game great for energy and playing the voice)

Each line of the rhyme (see below) is called out by the leader and echoed by the group. Each time you reach the last line, the leader introduces a new 'style' with which to repeat it, e.g. loud, quiet, slow, quick, gentle, angry, robot, cowboy, monster, cat, etc.

'I said a boom'  
 'I said a boom chicka boom'  
 'I said a boom chicka rocka chicka rocka chicka boom'  
 'Uh huh'  
 'Oh yeah'  
 'One more time in a \_\_\_\_\_ style.'

This call and response game could also be played using one of the Gwollump mantras from their story, e.g.

'I said Heads Down' / Heads Down  
 'I said Eyes Down' / Eyes Down  
 'Munch! Munch!' / Munch! Munch!  
 'Munch! Munch! Munch!' / Munch! Munch! Munch!  
 'One more time in a \_\_\_\_\_ style.'

Open this level of the training by recapping the mission parameters and why they have been chosen to undertake Story Seeker training. **Establish that they are all being asked to become Story Seekers, because their voice is important and should be heard. You might refer back to the young Gwollumps and how the herd needed to hear their voices – we all have a voice too.**

And level one of our training demonstrated that we all have stories within us, we all know stories, and we can all find stories to share.

Empower the children as creative storytellers by starting this session with a couple of storytelling exercises:

# ACTIVITY ONE:

## THE STORY OF MY NAME

In this activity, pupils are invited to share something about their name. This could be:

- Why they were given the name they have
- Why they like their name
- What their name may mean in another culture or language
- Who named them
- Who they were named after

You might follow up with a discussion about how we can all feel differently about our names, from day to day, year to year, or in certain situations. Also, how our names can allow us to feel different feelings e.g. strong, different or the same, graceful, adventurous.

Our names might be related to popular stories, characters of today, mythical characters or legends of the past. The story of our name allows us to share something about ourselves and our families and to discover things we didn't know about our classmates.

Adults in the room may also share the story of their name or surname.

Be sure to instruct pupils to share only one or two things about their name for parity across the class.

Finally, you might end the discussion by thinking about what the names of famous archetypal story characters hint at or reveal about that character and how.

*What does the name Rumpelstiltskin allow us to imagine?*

*What does Cinderella's name tell us about her?*

*What does the name Gwollump make us think about?*

If your pupil finds this hard to access, then hopefully you have managed to gather info about their name from the letter home. If you've had no luck with either, then you could prepare your own bit of research on their name.

If your pupils use audio switches or eye gaze then this is a good exercise that you can prepare beforehand.

### TEACHERS NOTE:

If someone chooses not to share, this is absolutely fine. It may be that in that moment an adult reflects something they like about that pupil's name if it feels appropriate. Or alternatively thinking about their name may stir a memory and which the pupil feels is particularly important for them to share in that moment. You may also wish to do this activity with half the class in one session and the following half in a separate session.

# ACTIVITY TWO:

## FORTUNATELY / UNFORTUNATELY

Seat the children in a circle. The aim is to work cooperatively to tell a coherent story with each pupil contributing one sentence at a time. The person selected to go first invents an opening line that establishes how the story starts. Every subsequent line must alternate between starting 'Fortunately...' or 'Unfortunately...' with each line building on the story that they have heard so far. They might draw upon some of the archetypal characters, settings and motivations discussed in the previous level when inventing this tale.

### For example:

- Once there was a wizard called Merlin who lived in a far-off kingdom.
- Fortunately, Merlin was good, kind and wise.
- Unfortunately, the wizard in the neighbouring kingdom was cruel and greedy.

- Fortunately, the cruel wizard was also cowardly and too frightened to attack the powerful Merlin
- Unfortunately, Merlin was mysteriously losing his powers.
- Fortunately... etc.

Challenge the class to see how far they can get in creating a story just by listening and responding to what was heard. Don't worry if the story feels a little stilted at times or if it goes in unexpected directions – keep it playful and enjoy the confusion as you go. Some stories may be very short, some may be long and convoluted – stress that it is fine what anyone says is part of the story. We're just exploring, playing and improvising.

To help with understanding and turn taking here, you could pass around the circle a double-sided piece of card with a 'thumbs up' for *Fortunately* on one side and a 'thumbs down' side for *Unfortunately*.

### TEACHERS NOTE:

A less complex version of this game, can be played using alternative sentence openers such as 'Yes, but...' or 'Yes, and...'

### For example:

Once, at the edge of a small forest lived a poor woodcutter.

- Yes, and he hadn't eaten for weeks.
- Yes, and his trees didn't grow fruit.
- Yes, and his cupboards were empty.
- Yes, and he felt all alone.
- Yes, and every day he went out searching deeper and deeper into the forest.
- Yes, and then one day he found a small rabbit caught in a trap.
- Yes, and it suddenly spoke to him.
- Yes, and it said... etc.

Versions of these games may also be played with smaller groups which can make the storytelling quicker or easier. You could even choose to have just two storytellers, bouncing sentences back and forth.



# ACTIVITY THREE:

## EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING - LANGUAGE

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Share your teacher's story template from lesson four again and demonstrate the differences in language choices between summarising your template (as we did in lesson four) and actually telling the story.

When summarising you might simply say:

'My main characters is a tortoise. It takes place a long time ago on the edge of a rainforest. They want water to drink and food to eat because there is a drought..'

Then, when telling the story, you might say:

'Once, long ago in a distant land, the rains suddenly stopped. Day by day, week by week, the earth dried and cracked, the rivers narrowed and the waterholes dried up..'

Discuss which of the two versions sounds more like a story.

*What words or phrases did they find most effective?*

*What helped them to understand what was happening, or visualise the story clearly in their minds?*

Once you have modelled working with the opening of the story, you can ask the children to help you compose and refine the language choices in later elements of the story. Go through each section of the template one at a time, starting with the language of recap. Then, ask the children to suggest a phrase or a sentence that they might expect to hear if they were being told a story.

Afterwards, children can return to their own templates and put that into practice, working with a partner. During the modelled activity, phrases that children have identified as being particularly effective can be added to the working wall for children to borrow or adapt for their own stories.

Once children have had the chance to practice composing sections of their stories, they may wish to share some of what they have achieved with the wider group.

Move on to considering how we use our voices (or preferred method of communication) to share these language choices as effectively as possible.

*How might we use our voices (or preferred method of communication) to ensure that our stories are understood by our audience?*

For children who communicate verbally, you could discuss different ways the children already know in order to alter or affect their voice when speaking. Children may suggest altering pitch, tone, dynamics and tempo. You might make links with the music curriculum if any of these terms have already been contextualised in those lessons.

Another way to explore pitch, tone, dynamics and tempo is as follows:

1. Take two chairs
2. Label each chair with two contrasting tempos, pitches, tones or dynamics.  
So, for example
  - Fast, Slow
  - High, Low
  - Quiet, Loud
  - Hard, Soft
3. Now decide on a well-known phrase or quote from a story.

For example:

- 'A little magic can take you a long way'  
*James and the Giant Peach.*
- 'Girls are just as clever as boys and don't you forget it'  
*The Railway Children.*
- 'Excuse me, I'm very hungry, do you think I could have tea with you'  
*The Tiger Who Came to Tea.*
- 'A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away'  
*Star Wars.*

4. Finally, encourage your pupil to say the phrase sat on each chair but saying it however it is labelled. E.g. loud, soft etc

Discuss after each one what type of story this may be from and why?

Who could be saying the line and what type of character might they be?

How does changing the tempo/dynamic change the storytelling?

Then fit it to their story in whichever tone etc that they want to choose.

If your learner finds this too challenging, then you could start to fit together their story in phrases that they have chosen.

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## ACTIVITY FOUR: EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING - VOCAL TECHNIQUES

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Having experimented with storytelling language and discussed what our own voices can do, tell the children that you are going to watch a video of a professional storyteller in action. Select one of the storytelling films from the STORY SEEKER STORY BANK for this activity. The majority of the stories are approximately ten minutes long.

If possible, make time for the children to watch the storytelling film twice. The first time instruct them to just listen to the story and to be prepared to discuss:

- What they like about it and why?
- Their favourite moment
- What was the most important moment in the story etc.

During the second time of watching the film, ask the children to pay attention and note down some of the ways in which the storyteller uses their voice to engage the listeners and to communicate different aspects of the story. You might suggest that on the second watch, children close their eyes to focus on only responding to the voice for this activity.

Give them time to talk in groups about some of ways in which they noticed the storyteller using their voice, then invite each group to share their observations with the whole class, creating a list on the working wall of some of these strategies. These might include:

- Adjusting the tone or pitch of their voice
- Using pauses or silences
- Involving the listener
- Using call and response
- Slowing down or speeding up
- Repeating phrases
- Using different accents or voices for different characters

Ask them to reflect on what elements they have seen and discussed would be an effective addition to their own storytelling.

*What is it that they most enjoy when being told a story, perhaps by someone in their family, a technique or style, that they'd like to try themselves?*

Encourage them to choose only two or three elements rather than trying to incorporate everything all at once.

Finally, go back to the section of the template that they looked at earlier in today's session and think about how they will incorporate those elements. Ensure that they have a partner to work with so that they can once again retell and rehearse that section bringing those elements to bear.

## TEACHERS NOTE:

For children who are D/deaf or hearing impaired an alternative approach to this exercise would be to ask them to focus solely on the different ways the storyteller and the BSL interpreter use their face and facial expressions to give meaning and clarity to their language choices. The physicality of the storyteller will then be explored further in lesson six.

There are quite a few Makaton, BSL storytellers that can be found on YouTube. RNLB have a large range of audio stories which can be used for free. You may also find it useful to look up dance companies that tell stories through dance or even look up dances by Giovanni Pernice and Rose Ayling-Ellis on *Strictly Come Dancing* and discuss what they thought the story was.

## LESSON SIX:

## THE STORYTELLER'S PHYSICALITY

**Focus:** Building on the previous session's exploration of the ways in which a storyteller might use their voice to engage listeners and express different aspects of the narrative, this session will allow the trainees to consider how their physicality can impact their storytelling.

**N.B** It is best to deliver this lesson in a hall space if you can.

### ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

#### 1. PHYSICAL WARM UP

Pupils prepare for this movement session by exploring different ways they can use their bodies and physicality to communicate.

#### 2. STORYTELLER'S PHYSICALITY

Using the same **STORY SEEKER STORY BANK** film as lesson five, ask pupils to identify the different ways that professional storytellers use their bodies in different ways to enhance their storytelling.

#### 3. USING OUR BODIES FOR STORYTELLING

Pupils are asked to tell a story just using their bodies and share this with the rest of the class.

## ACTIVITY ONE: PHYSICAL WARM UP

Begin today's session with one or two warm-up exercises. You might select one of the exercises listed below, or you could repeat an activity from previous sessions that the children have enjoyed.

#### Obstacle Course

This is a fun and physical warm-up game that will support children's visualisation and support their collaborative and listening skills.

The children should start by standing in a circle. There is a call by a leader and players need to

make physical action in response – the leader role will probably be taken by the class teacher to begin with, although as children grow accustomed to the game, they might take turns to lead the activity. Start with three simple actions, for example, the leader says **BLADE** and everyone must **DUCK** as if a blade is swinging at their heads. The leader says **LOG** and everyone **JUMPS** as if a log is rolling towards them. The leader says **WATERFALL** and everyone rows or swims as fast and hard as they can so they don't go over falls.

As the game develops, ask children to suggest actions that might be connected with the settings or events in one of the stories they have worked on.

Don't be afraid to simplify or adapt the movements if needed. For example, if there are mobility issues then instead of jumping when the leader says LOG they could reach up.

### Paired Storytelling

In this activity, children have the opportunity to work in pairs exploring some of the ways in which stories can be communicated both vocally and physically. In pairs, ask children to pick a story that they both know reasonably well. This might be a popular fairy tale like *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* or *Red Riding Hood*, or they could choose one of the stories that they've already found and shared as part of the training process.

Give them a couple of minutes to discuss and possibly map out the key points of the story.

Explain that as one of the pair is narrating the story, the other will act out the actions as each significant character or event is introduced. You might remind children of the ways in which we physically brought aspects of *The Gwollumps Tale* to life during our Story Whoosh activity in lesson three.

After a few minutes, swap over so that both children have had a chance to try both roles. This is a playful warm-up activity so it doesn't matter if they forget a piece of the story, or if details may be different – part of the fun is embellishing or adding details.

This can also be run as a group exercise with one narrator and the whole group acting at the same time. This can be empowering for your pupil to see their peers acting out something they have created.

### ► WHY NOT?

You could ask them to revisit, refine and rehearse their telling of the story, sharing both the narration and the acting out and finding points in the storytelling where they swap roles. Can they find a way to seamlessly hand over the narration? Ask them to practice working together to make the storytelling smooth, and to find an energy and pace together that works for their story. After sufficient rehearsal time, invite the groups to perform their stories for each other and think about what is challenging and satisfying about this way of telling a story for an audience.



**Stop and Go**

Repeat the Stop and Go activity that the children were introduced to in lesson two using this opportunity to add in some of the characters, actions and settings from some of the stories that the class have found. You might also provide children with the opportunity to play with transitioning from one character to another contrasting option, e.g. from the beast to the prince while you count from one to five.

**Leading with a Body Part**

Ask children to start by walking around the space, making sure they are finding their own space when walking. Suggest ways in which they might explore different levels and pace. Then explain that you are going to call out the name of a part of the body and ask them to try letting that part of themselves 'lead' them around the space. For example, how does it look and feel to be lead by your head, or your elbow, your knee or your shoulder, etc. This can be repeated with different body parts or the children could volunteer to take on the responsibility to call out the body parts. It can be helpful to play music to accompany this exercise.

*This works well across all abilities. Again, simplify and adapt whichever way suits with your pupils.*

**Make Me a...**

Before beginning this five-minute exercise, get the children into groups of four or five. Ask everyone to walk around the space as they have for previous exercises, mixing up with each other, so that they are not just walking with their own group.

When the teacher calls out 'Make me a... clock / Big Ben / washing machine/ lawn mower... etc.', the children have to find their group and get into a space to make the shape the teacher has called out. Give them only about ten seconds to achieve this, counting down so they know how long they have. You could expand on this exercise by asking the groups to bring their objects to life. For example, if they were a washing machine what would that sound like and how would it move?

*This is a great exercise to break down physical barriers and to get your children physically connected and lose inhibitions. Using a countdown gives a brilliant focus and gets them working together as a team quickly. Try theming it with objects from your pupil's story each time and use this exercise in each session.*

## ACTIVITY TWO: STORYTELLER'S PHYSICALITY

Rewatch the storyteller film from the previous session, this time asking children to take note of all of the ways in which the storyteller uses their body and how it impacts the storytelling. Note all of these things on the working wall for the children to draw on throughout the storytelling practice.

### These might include:

- Facial expressions
- Gesturing with hands and arms
- Miming actions
- Embodying characters
- Moving around (using the frame of the camera in different ways)
- Rhythm, body percussion: stamping, clapping, etc

Also, just as during the previous session, we looked at the impact of silence, you might consider the impact of pauses in moments of tension or reflection.

In each instance or example drawn out by the class, consider together what aspect of the storytelling this is affecting – perhaps it maintains the engagement of the listeners, perhaps it clarifies unfamiliar vocabulary, perhaps it adds humour, or tension, or our empathy with the character.

It's worth having a look through all the wonderful storytellers in our story bank to help you decide which ones would best suit your children's needs

## ACTIVITY THREE: USING OUR BODIES FOR STORYTELLING

For the rest of this session, the children will work together in small groups to experiment with adding physicality to our storytelling. Get the children into groups of between four and six.

Ask each group to choose a story that they are going to present at the end of the lesson. This could be a story familiar to the class, such as a famous fairy tale or fable; or it might be one of the stories that they brought from home at the end of level one; or they can use *The Gwollumps Tale*, with which they should be familiar. Having selected the story, they now need to decide on five key moments from the story. What are the main events without which the story wouldn't work? They can jot these down or draw them out.

Once they have chosen their five moments, ask them to create a freeze frame for each moment, as they have in previous sessions. If there are fewer

characters in the scene than there are members in the group, ask them to think about other ways in which the children could be used to help portray details of the setting, props or background characters. They can decide whether it's necessary to have the same child representing the same character in all five still images, or whether the roles can be shared around the group from image to image.

When they all have their five images ask them to practise moving from one to the next holding each image for a count of five and moving to the next image on the count of five in slow motion.

When they have done this ask the whole class to rehearse those moments at the same time while you count: Image one – move: one, two, three, four, five; image two – move one, two, three, four, five – and so on.

After the children have had sufficient time to rehearse their still images and their transitions, you can build towards sharing by adding music. Play the children three pieces of contrasting music – classical music and film scores tend to be work well for this. Ask them which one they think would work best with their piece. Underscoring movement work with music works well to support children when sharing their work as they respond to the mood, pace and tone of the music.

One by one ask the groups to share their movement pieces. If they are all working on the same story (perhaps *The Gwollumps Tale*) they can discuss the ways in which they all showed the same story slightly differently and what they enjoyed in those different ways of telling the same story.

If they are working on different stories, they may need to tell the rest of their class the title of their story and some details around what their story is about – the main character, what they want, the problem, what helps them and how the story ends

(the resolution). If they are each working on a different fairy tale the rest of the class could try to guess the story just from the movement.

If working on the *Gwollumps' Tale*, it may be useful as a resource to make some character signifiers. These could be a mask or a simple headband or hat. This will give clarity for your pupil watching their classmates when they show back their still images.

If you are in a big enough space, it may help to mark out five spaces on the floor to show the five key elements of the story. If you are pushed for space, you could pass around an empty picture frame and create each moment within it. Both of these techniques will contain the pictures and a clear framework to work within.

If these exercises work for you, then why not think about using them when you come to share your stories, possibly as an immersive performance for your audience or a great set up to film.

## ► WHY NOT?

You could extend this activity by suggesting the children bring the moments alive by adding two or three lines of dialogue or sound effects to each of the moments. They could also make the decision to add a narrator (this role can be shared between the group) – someone who steps out of the drama and tells the audience what is happening.

To support and develop further children's understanding of how physicality and vocal tone work together to communicate effectively, you could share a story in an unfamiliar language. This story might be shared by a member of the school community if multiple languages are spoken or online videos could be used for children to respond to. How do the images, the physicality and the tone help the audience to understand what the story might have been about?

## LESSON SEVEN:

# THE STORYTELLER'S MEMORY AND IMAGINATION

**Focus:** In this session, we continue to develop the children's storytelling and story creation skills by supporting them in building confidence in their ability to tell a whole story. Sometimes children might use a simple mnemonic or prop to prompt their memory of the significant events and sequence of a story that they are telling. At other times, children can have faith in their ability to invent and improvise elements of the story through collaboration, focus and active listening.

## ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

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### 1. WARM UP

Prepare pupils for this session by engaging in one or two exercises that focus on creativity and the imagination.

### 2. REFLECTION

As we approach the end of their Story Seeker training, pupils are asked to reflect on what they have learned about what makes a good storyteller. The focus of this lesson is to introduce them to how storytellers actively use their memory and imagination.

### 3. PAINTING PICTURES AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Pupils are asked to visualise one moment from a familiar story and to paint a detailed picture of that moment to a partner just with their words.

# ACTIVITY ONE:

## WARM UP

As in lessons five and six, start off with one of the warm-up exercises below.

Some children with ASC can find jumping into the imaginary world a challenge, so always scaffold imaginative play exercises to help understanding, particularly at the start.

### My Magic Box

Ask the pupils to sit in a circle and ask them to each think of an object. In turn, ask them to mime removing their chosen object from their magic box and interacting with it.

Allow the rest of the group to guess what the object might be. Start with the teacher modelling the process, miming slowly and theatrically taking their object out of the magic box and then improvising with it. For example, you might take out a photo album and then mime looking at the photos and showing on your face what the photos mean to you.

Ask the group to guess what they think it is. Afterwards, the teacher should mime putting it back into the box and pass the box on to the person next to them. Each child then takes a turn as the box is passed around the circle.

What do we understand about the object from the mime? Is the object small or big? How does the person opening the box feel about it?

Using a physical box for this helps pupils to focus just on what's in it rather than imagining the box as well. You could use a shoe box, a little suitcase or even a bag. You should always do a couple of contrasting demonstrations before passing the box to your learner. Why not play some music while you are doing this – instrumental music like the Harry Potter theme can spark imagination and make the exercise less exposing.

### If This Wasn't a Rope

This exercise uses a piece of rope or string (or even a scarf or stick could work), so don't forget to bring one of these items to the lesson.

Start with the children in a circle and model the activity by holding up the rope and saying: 'If this wasn't a rope it could be...' Show what this rope might be by miming with it and simultaneously saying what it is – perhaps a necklace, spaghetti, a hole in the ground, etc.

Pass the rope around the circle and ask each child to come up with one thing the rope could be. Remind the children that if someone has had their idea ahead of them, they can use it again.

As the children develop confidence in the exercise, you can begin to ask children questions or prompts that might develop the beginning of the story. For example: 'That's a very expensive necklace, where did you get it from?' or 'I wonder what would happen if we went down into the hole – where would it take us?'

You could always use a piece of material for this to add a more sensory element to it and allow for interaction with your learner, to give them the extra support if needed.



# ACTIVITY TWO: REFLECTION

Bring the class together to discuss their progress in reaching Story Seeker status – they have nearly completed their training.

*What do they think they still need to learn or develop in order to fulfil their mission?*

*What other skills does a storyteller need?*

Revisit what children have learnt over the last two sessions about the ways in which a storyteller uses their language and their physicality to connect with their listeners and to communicate their story clearly and effectively. We've also started to look at how we can collaborate with

other storytellers to bring the worlds of our stories to life and we have experimented with using music to help us tell our stories.

Today, we want to think about the most important skill the storyteller has: how do they use imagination? We'll be exploring the way in which the storyteller isn't just engaging the audience but how the storyteller is also actively engaged at all times: they are thinking, responding, watching and listening, as well as telling.

*With SEND it's useful to recap and reflect at the end of every session of the project.*

## TEACHERS NOTE:

Often, the aspect of storytelling that children (and adults) find most worrying is the thought of trying to remember the story. It is worth spending some time discussing how the children have felt so far in their training about remembering the order of events in stories before telling them.

Explore children's pre-existing experiences around strategies they have used to remember stories while preparing to tell them or as prompts they use while telling a story. Children can discuss elements from the training so far, such as the *On the Line* activity and the *Six-Part Story Template*. They might also have experience using storyboards, story maps or story stones to sequence and scaffold the main events in a story.

# ACTIVITY THREE:

## PAINTING PICTURES AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Ask the children to select a story that they know reasonably well and that they enjoy telling or hearing. This might be a story that they've already worked with during their training so far.

Ask them to find a space on their own, to close their eyes and to imagine what happens in one moment of the story – to visualise that moment in their mind's eye.

As they hold the image in their mind, ask them a series of prompts that will support them in adding layers of detail to the image they are visualising. The details could later be used to support a listener's visualisation while storytelling, or they could impact the story in other ways.

### Prompts might include:

- What time of day is it?
- What is the weather and light like?
- What colours can you see?
- Are there any sounds? The wind, traffic on a street, the sea, bird song, rustlings in the undergrowth?
- Are there any smells?
- Who is in this moment in the story?
- What are they wearing?
- What is happening?

Once children have had time to visualise their moment on their own, ask them to join up with a partner. In their pairs, ask each child to take it in turns to describe the moment in their story in as much detail as they can for their partner for exactly one minute.

The listener just listens – they don't interrupt or ask questions. However, at the end of the listening time they can ask one question of their partner that might prompt them to clarify something the

listener didn't understand or add in a further detail. Then, they can swap roles.

After both children have described their moment in detail, ask the children to draw the moment described in their partner's story.

Explain this is not about drawing skills – they can depict the essence of the story in the way they want to, including doing a detailed drawing, creating a map of the moment with symbols representing what happened or an abstract drawing where they use colour and shape to represent the moment in the story.

After sufficient drawing time, ask them to share their drawing with their partner. What struck them about each other's descriptions? Invite them to consider what their partner picked up from them describing the moment.

*What similarities and differences are there between the storyteller's visualisation of the moment and the picture drawn by their partner?*

*Is it what they would have expected?  
Why/why not?*

Finish the session by discussing and celebrating their progress so far as trainee Story Seekers.

*What skills have they developed?*

*Are there any areas of storytelling that they are feeling more confident about?*

*Where would they still like more support?*

*Can they make a list on the working wall of what they think makes a good storyteller?*

*Explaining the concept of a ‘mind’s eye’ could be a tricky to understand for some children with ASC. Some suggestions could be:*

- *It’s how we can see with our eyes shut, like when we dream*
- *Close your eyes and picture a television, now turn it on and let’s see what story is on*
- *Close your eyes and see the theatre curtains go up to tell us the story.*

*This is also a perfect chance to add sensory elements to your stories, for example:*

- *With everyone’s eyes shut you pretend you are on a boat and add a gentle water spray that they can feel on their faces*
- *Smell can be used to bring stories to life. Mix an essential oil with water and spray the air – it could smell like chocolate, bubble gum or freshly mowed grass*
- *Make a wind board out of an old cardboard box to give a gentle summer breeze.*

## LESSON EIGHT:

## SHARING STORIES

**Focus:** This final session celebrates pupils' graduation as fully fledged Story Seekers and asks them to consider the different ways that they could share their stories with as many people as possible. It will also give them an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the space that they will use to perform or film their story performances.

### ▶ LESSON SUMMARY:

#### 1. HOW ARE STORIES SHARED?

Pupils are asked to think about all the different ways that stories can be shared and their favourite ways to both hear stories and tell stories.

#### 2. PERFORMANCE SPACE

Pupils are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the layout of their performance space through playing a fun game in order to complete their training.

## ACTIVITY ONE: HOW ARE STORIES SHARED?

Explain to the children that they have very nearly completed their training as Story Seekers. They have worked as a group to develop their knowledge of stories, they have shared stories with the other trainees in their cohort and have worked hard to develop their storytelling abilities and expertise – they have trained their voices, their bodies and their minds. They only have one challenge left and then they will be ready to find and share stories for the Story Seeker mission.

Ask them to spend a few moments with their group, talking about all of the ways in which they have experienced stories in their lives – how many different ways can they think of that a story might be shared with the world? After five minutes of group work, bring the class back together and create a class list.

#### These might include:

*Published in books*  
*Comics or graphic novels*  
*In a painting or sculpture*  
*On YouTube*  
*On Twitter or other social media*  
*In films or on television*  
*Acted as a play in a theatre*  
*Danced in a ballet*  
*Sung in a song or as a musical or opera*  
*In a puppet show*  
*As an animated cartoon*  
*Told by a storyteller*

Discuss their favourite ways of engaging with a story as a listener, as well as which methods they might prefer as the one telling the story.

# ACTIVITY TWO: PERFORMANCE SPACE

Practice setting up the space where they will film or perform their stories and then play the following game in order to familiarise the group with the different positions on the set. This means when they come to perform their stories, they will have clarity about what to do at each position in the space.

This is based on the game 'Captain's Coming'.

As teacher you will be the 'Captain' initially who will call out orders to the class. They will then all move to the relevant place that matches each word or phrase.

1. Establish the different positions involved in the performance. You may want to mark these out on the floor in masking tape.

**Story circle** - Where our stories come to life / the performance space

**Audience line** - Where we sit and watch and listen to the stories.

**Centre mark** - Where we tell our Stories to our audience

**Entrance** - Where we enter our Story Circle from our Audience position and stand on our Centre mark to tell our stories.

2. Ask the group to move to each position in turn so that they are clear how each instruction relates to the position.

3. Call out the names of each position randomly and the group must move to that place. You might want to then ask a pupil to take over the role of captain if appropriate once the group are familiar with the positions.
4. You could add another layer to the game adding these actions as well:

**Story circle** - Act out with no talking a character from any story but only when in the circle.

**Audience line** - Show us with your faces what type of story you are watching- Is it happy, funny, sad, shocking?

**Centre mark** - Walk into the centre and introduce yourself 'My name is Jon and I am a Story Seeker.'

**Entrance** - Make a dramatic entrance and exit as a character from a story.

They are now fully fledged Story Seekers and are ready to practice their chosen stories and then film or stage them ready to share with as many people as possible. Finish this session by celebrating their achievements over the past eight sessions.

## TEACHERS NOTE:

See **FILM/PERFORM** section of the Mission Guide and the related digital resources on the Story Seekers website for different ways to approach this.

Think about the eight sessions that you have delivered, and which exercises and structures worked well. You can use these as a tool when filming or staging your pupils' stories. The safety of a structure that they have used before can really help and provide a great base from which to lift off and share their wonderful stories.

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